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JOHNSON & BOSWELL REVISED

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BY

THEMSELVES AND OTHERS

Three Essays by

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and

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JOHNSON'S REVISION OF HIS PUBLICATIONS
especially *The Rambler*, *Rasselas*, and *The Idler*

A Paper read before the Johnson Club, 17 March 1926, by
DAVID NICHOL SMITH

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THIS is a subject on which Johnson himself is silent and on which Boswell says little, and that little perhaps misleading. None of Johnson's works before the final edition of *The Lives of the Poets* bears on its title-page the words 'revised' or 'corrected', with the exception, as we should expect, of the *Dictionary*; and none of them contains a preface or advertisement announcing that he has made any alterations. I ought to make it clear at once that I am not speaking of alterations in manuscript or in proof, but solely of alterations in published works. As far as I know, neither Boswell nor any other biographer has recorded any observation by Johnson to suggest that he had revised any of his writings before he revised *The Lives of the Poets* for the edition of 1783. The nearest approach to an observation of this kind is on revision in general. On 15 June 1784 he was asked, 'Do you think, Sir, you could make your *Ramblers* better?'

> *Johnson.* Certainly I could.
> *Boswell.* I'll lay a bet, Sir, you cannot.
> *Johnson.* But I will, Sir, if I choose. I shall make the best of them you shall pick out, better.
> *Boswell.* But you may add to them. I will not allow of that.
> *Johnson.* Nay, Sir, there are three ways of making them better; putting out,—adding,—or correcting.
>
> (Ed. G. B. H. iv. 309.)

These remarks are quite non-committal. As I read them, they contain no indication that Johnson had, or had not, engaged in the serious revision of the *Ramblers*, or of any of his works. But that Boswell himself believed that there

had been no revision of the *Ramblers* is clear from another passage where he says that "posterity will be astonished when they are told, upon the authority of Johnson himself, that many of these discourses, which we should suppose had been laboured with all the slow attention of literary leisure, were written in haste as the moment pressed, without even being read over by him before they were printed" (i. 203). Clearly Boswell thought that posterity was to read these discourses exactly as they were first printed, and that at no stage had they been laboured with all the slow attention of literary leisure.

Two passages come to my mind where Boswell is definite, one way or the other, on the subject of revision. The first is when he speaks of the alteration of the word 'garret' to 'patron' in the famous line in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, "Pride, envy, want, the patron, and the jail". He tells us he has been comparing the various editions of Johnson's imitations of Juvenal (i. 264). Here, for once, Boswell is a textual critic. His quotations from Johnson's writings are notoriously inaccurate, but here, for once, he is the methodical scholar, examining the differing copies of Johnson's poems and noting the progressive changes of reading. But only in Johnson's verse, it would appear, was Boswell aware of any revision. The other passage where he makes a definite statement concerns *Rasselas*. On 2 June 1781 when Johnson went down to Welwyn (the residence of the author of *Night Thoughts*) along with Boswell and Charles Dilly, he talked little to them in the carriage; he was reading Dr. Watson's second volume of *Chemical Essays* and his own *Rasselas*. On this, says Boswell, "he seemed to be intensely fixed; having told us that he had not looked at it since it was first published" (iv. 119). This statement is definite enough. No revision of *Rasselas* 'since it was first published'.

I will even say that Boswell was definitely of the opinion

that none of Johnson's prose works had been revised 'since they were first published', with the exception of *The Lives of the Poets*. This opinion is as a consequence shared by the great majority of Johnsonians. I now venture to ask you to examine it.

Johnson divides authors into two great classes—those who continue to take an interest in their works once they are published, and those who do not. Representatives of the two classes are Pope and Dryden. Pope's "parental attention never abandoned" his work (ed. G. B. H. iii. 221, § 307). But Dryden "was no lover of labour. What he had once written he dismissed from his thoughts. The hastiness of his productions might be the effect of necessity; but his subsequent neglect could hardly have any other cause than impatience of study" (i. 465, § 341). In which of these two classes did Johnson rank himself? His last sentence about Dryden has, I think, a very important bearing on this question. "The hastiness might be due to necessity, but the subsequent neglect must have been due to impatience of study." There is the semblance of a rebuke here. Was Johnson administering a rebuke to himself as well as to Dryden? I think not. Be hasty if you must, but if you have any interest in your work put it right as soon as you can. That is in effect what this sentence says, and to anticipate, to state my conclusions before I produce any evidence, that is what, I believe, Johnson did. When he had been hasty he put his work right as soon as he could.

Of his greater works three stand out in respect of the haste of their original composition—*The Rambler*, *Rasselas*, and *The Idler*. Many of the *Ramblers* were written while the printer was waiting for the copy. *Rasselas*, according to the well-known story, which may not be literally true, was written in the evenings of a week. The *Idlers* were written much as the *Ramblers* were: there is Bennet Langton's story

how Johnson when in Oxford finished an *Idler* just in time for the post, and sent it off without reading it over. Johnson's Preface to his *Dictionary* and his Preface to his Shakespeare are in a different category, for in these he was not pressed for time. I now propose to take the three hastily written works in turn, and to inquire when and to what extent they were revised. I must produce evidence; but as you have not the opportunity now of testing this evidence you cannot be convinced, and I need not therefore produce much of it, but just enough, I hope, to induce a disposition towards acceptance, or, as the poet says, to procure a willing suspension of disbelief, should there be any.

When I bought my first set of the original numbers of *The Rambler* I was disconcerted to find this imprint at the end of the first number: "London: St. John's Gate. Printed for J. Payne, and J. Bouquet, in Pater-noster-row, where Letters for the Rambler are received, and the preceding Numbers may be had." What were the numbers that preceded the first number of the original issue? Apparently this was a reprint. My suspicions were in time confirmed. I found a copy of the first number with the brief imprint: "London: Printed for J. Payne, and J. Bouquet, in Pater-noster-Row; where Letters for the Author are received." I had then to compare the two issues, to find if there were any other differences. There are several, though not of great significance: "freed us from the Dangers" becomes "freed them from Dangers"; "has been" becomes "is"; "on some Occasions" becomes "on certain Occasions"; "held for a Maxim" becomes "held a Maxim". This revision took place, I suppose, when the original numbers were collected to be bound together. Evidently the stock of No. 1 was exhausted and a reprint was required.

The *Ramblers* were thoroughly revised for the collected duodecimo edition of 1752. For No. 1 Johnson worked on

the *second* issue of the original. Those who possess only the first issue, and the duodecimo, have not the material for establishing the complete history of the text. There is a missing link. They will assume that the corrections were made for the duodecimo, whereas many were made earlier. The corrections made in 1752 in the first number were slight. The most important is in the last paragraph, where "entangle himself" is changed to "encumber himself". The point on which I wish to lay stress is that by 1752 Johnson had twice revised a paper which was first issued in March 1750.

There were further corrections. If we compare the text of the first *Rambler* in the 1752 edition with the text in the Oxford edition of 1825 we shall find many changes. For example, in the first paragraph "inextricable perplexity" has been simplified to "perplexity", for "enjoy in its place the security of prescription" we find "enjoy the security of prescription"; in the next paragraph "the too ardent desire" becomes, simply, "the desire". These changes can be traced back to what is called "the fourth edition" published in 1756. Johnson's last serious revision of *The Rambler* took place in that year, just after he had finished the *Dictionary*. By that time the first number had been published in London (I leave out of account the Edinburgh and the Dublin editions) in four different states; the other numbers in three states.

Further signs of Johnson's interest in the 1756 edition are the insertion of the translations of the Latin or Greek mottoes or quotations immediately beneath the Latin or Greek, and the addition of an Index. In this Index occurs the entry "Milton, Mr. John" (see *Boswell*, ed. G. B. H. iv. 325). There is also the entry "Shakespeare, Mr. William".

In Alexander Chalmers's edition of the *British Essayists* it is stated that the alterations made by Johnson in the second and third editions are as many as 6,834. What does he mean by the third edition? Did he ever see a copy of *The*

Rambler with the words "third edition" on the title-page? Such an edition is recorded, very briefly, date 1756, in Courtney's *Bibliography*, but I have no recollection where a copy of this edition is to be found. If a member of this Club should ever find one, he ought, as a national duty, to ask our Prior[1] what to do with it, and to follow his advice. Chalmers must have meant by "second edition" the first collected edition in duodecimo ("second edition" is not on the title-page), and by "third" an edition containing the same text as the so-called "fourth edition". The number 6,834 is not an overestimate. I have compared the three states, completely, of only one essay, No. 180, on the errors and failures of men of learning. The second form shows at least sixty verbal corrections of the first (I do not include changes in punctuation), and the third at least sixty of the second. If the corrections were as numerous in all the papers, the total would be over 25,000. The corrections are often serious. At some places two or three lines are omitted; at others a line is added.

Courtney's *Bibliography* tells us that Chalmers's copy of the first edition with the marginal record of the corrections came into the possession of James Crossley, and in April 1913 was on sale by a London bookseller for £5 15*s.* 6*d.* I assume that we all missed it. But the book is not lost. It is only in hiding. Very few books are lost. Perhaps it is in America. Perhaps some of you know about it.

I turn now to *Rasselas*, published in April 1759. Johnson read it in 1781, when he said that he had not looked at it since it was first published. Were any new readings to be found in the next edition, that of 1783? I found many readings not in the original edition, but did they belong to 1783? If not, when were they introduced? Almost every one of them, certainly all those that were important, can be

[1] Mr. Arundell Esdaile, a member of the staff of the British Museum.

traced right back to the second edition, which appeared two months after the first, also in 1759. Here again we find Johnson taking an early opportunity of revising a work which he had not had time to revise carefully when it was written. The corrections are not nearly so heavy as in *The Rambler*. If we may trust the list of variants contributed by O. F. Emerson to *Anglia* in 1899 (pp. 501–7), they are about sixty in all. My own examination of the first and second editions has extended, minutely, to only a few chapters, and it has satisfied me that Emerson's list is fairly accurate.

Some of the more interesting of the alterations are these:

	1	2
Chap. I.	successive monarchs	a long race of monarchs
III.	labour or danger can procure	labour or danger can procure or purchase
X.	successive generations	future generations
XXIX.	His look was clouded with thought	*Omitted.*
„	The things that are now before us . . . necessarily require attention, and sufficiently deserve it	The things that are now before us . . . require attention, and deserve it
XXXI.	successive gratifications	perpetual gratifications
XXXIV.	Wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated	Wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them?
XXXVIII.	could be much solaced by silken flowers	could receive solace from silken flowers

There are alterations also in some of the chapter headings.

This revision took place immediately after the publication of the first edition. But there is a crop of new and minor

variants to be found in the fourth edition, 1766: 'surely has' for 'has surely', 'and' for 'or', 'tenuity of air' for 'tenuity of the air', &c. How are we to account for these? Before we can confidently attribute them to Johnson, we must know of a change of greater import than any yet discussed. And we have Johnson's word that he had not looked at the book since it was first published. It is just possible that he had glanced at it when it was reprinting in 1766, and forgotten. But the point of real interest is that the book was carefully revised in 1759, and Johnson says that he had not looked at it since it was first published. There is no contradiction here. Johnson regarded revision after publication, should it be required, as part of the process of publication. If a book was hastily written, the act of authorship was not complete till the book had been revised. Further, suppose we had written a novel twenty years ago, had made here and there slight verbal changes (affecting not the matter but only the expression) for the second edition which was called for immediately, and had not looked at the book since that time, should we not say that we had not seen it since it was first published? I think we should. But it is incontestable that Boswell had no idea that *Rasselas* had ever been revised. He took Johnson's words in their literal and wrong meaning.

We need not refuse to believe that Johnson was in some way responsible for the alterations in the fourth edition, but if they were his they were only fortuitous. The best instance that I know of a fortuitous alteration anywhere in his writings is in the Preface to his Shakespeare, which was not hastily written. This Preface he had no occasion to *revise*, though there were some misprints that had to be corrected. He cast his eye over it when it was reprinting for the very important edition of 1778 (since 1773 it had been mainly the edition of George Steevens), and found that he could improve a paragraph in the section on Shakespeare's

faults by the insertion of a short sentence: 'What he does best, he soon ceases to do.' A thoroughly Johnsonian sentence. No one who knows Johnson can ever doubt who wrote it. Eight words of one syllable, and the ninth a word of two syllables; eight words of Saxon origin, and only one word ultimately of Latin origin. What nonsense has been written about Johnsonese.

Some of us used to be taught that we held the secret of Johnson's style if we knew the anecdote that he had once said of *The Rehearsal* 'it has not wit enough to keep it sweet', and then, thinking this too easy, translated it into 'it has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction'. Well, I can only say now that those who think that the essence of Johnson's style consists in amplification, in making a little go a long way with the help of a Latinized vocabulary, in using a Latin word in preference to an English one—these people *might* profit from a study of Johnson's revisions.

And now *The Idler*. As far as I know there is only one copy of the first edition of *The Idler*, and that is where it ought to be—in the British Museum. *The Idler*, unlike *The Rambler*, was not issued by itself: it was contributed to *The Universal Chronicle or Weekly Gazette*, finally called *The Universal Chronicle and Westminster Journal*. This newspaper ran to eight pages, three columns a page, and *The Idler* occupied at least the first two columns of the first page, from April 1758 to April 1760. But for Charles Burney's care and foresight in collecting and preserving the periodical literature of his day, we should not have been able to say much about Johnson's revisions of *The Idler*. We should have had to rely on the reprints in *The Grand Magazine*, or *The Grand Magazine of Magazines*, or *The London Chronicle*, or *The London Magazine*, or *The British Magazine*, and together they are far from giving us a complete set;

perhaps about thirty in all. As it is, the Burney set lacks one number, and I do not know how it can be supplied.

The *Idlers* were collected in two neat duodecimo volumes in 1761. No. 22 was totally omitted: it is the satirical paper on vultures suggested by the carnage of the Seven Years' War. "Man is the only beast who kills that which he does not devour." We can understand why Johnson omitted it, but its omission puts wrong the numbering of all the subsequent papers. It was No. 104 that ended the series on 5 April 1760, but in the collected edition it is called 103. Was the text revised? The answer is what I think I may now say we should expect—it was. My comparison of the two editions has been hasty, but it has revealed that the alterations extend even to the names of the characters. Lady Tawdry in No. 53 (i.e. 54) was originally Lady Careless. The concluding clauses of the last number were wholly rewritten. This is how they now read:

> the hour at which probation ceases, and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart shall be brought to judgment, and an everlasting futurity shall be determined by the past.

And this is what they were originally:

> At the last Hour Probation ceases, and Repentance will be vain; there will be no longer any Place for Design of Amendment; we can then do no more, and on what has been already done Eternity must depend; at the last Day shall be brought to Judgment every Work of the Hand, and Imagination of the Heart.

The final form is superior beyond comparison.

Most of the reprints of *The Idler* in the magazines of the day were unauthorized, but three of the numbers were reproduced in *The British Magazine* "by permission of the author" (Nos. 89, 97, 104). The first of these appears in the first number, January 1760. This was not Johnson's only encouragement of the new venture, which is chiefly

remembered now because it contains Smollett's *Launcelot Greaves* in serial form, and some of Goldsmith's essays, e.g. *A Reverie at the Boar's Head Tavern in East-cheap*. To the first number Johnson contributed his essay on *The Bravery of the English Common Soldiers*. I would point out to the Secretary to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press[1] that there is no mention of this in Courtney's *Bibliography*. I would point out to our Prior[2] that there is no mention of it in the bibliography in the *Cambridge History of Literature*. Most strange of all, there is not a word about *The British Magazine* in Boswell. When the essay on *The Bravery of the English Common Soldiers* was added to the 1767 edition of *The Idler*, it was reprinted without alteration. It had not been written while the printer's man was waiting for copy.

The course to be taken by an editor of *The Rambler*, *Rasselas*, and *The Idler* seems to me not to be debatable. He has no option but to base his text on the earliest edition which contains Johnson's final revisions. If he thinks of recording all the discarded readings in *The Rambler* and *The Idler*, he will not easily find a publisher. On the other hand, a list of the variants in *Rasselas* would be manageable and interesting[3].

Johnson's Poems present an entirely different set of problems, if indeed it can be said that the prose works present any problems at all. The poems were not written in haste. One of the problems is how far the new readings in Dodsley's Collection are authoritative. Here is an instance. In the original edition of *London* we have this couplet:

> Fair Justice then, without Constraint ador'd,
> Sustain'd the Ballance, but resign'd the Sword.

[1] Mr. R. W. Chapman, then present.

[2] Mr. A. E. Esdaile, also present, and understood to be in charge of the revised bibliographies in the *Cambridge History*.

[3] This list, meticulously accurate and final, has since been published by Mr. Chapman in his edition of *Rasselas*, 1927.

But Justice does not *resign* the sword. She is traditionally represented as holding the sword with the point drooped, or resting on the ground. So we get a new reading in Dodsley:

> Fair Justice then, without constraint ador'd,
> Held high the steady scale, but deep'd the sword.

What is *deep'd*? No instance of *deep* as a verb is given in Johnson's *Dictionary*, or is known to the editors of the *N. E. D.* Yet this reading "deep'd the sword" occurs in at least seventeen issues of the poem between 1748 and 1789. In Hawkins's edition of the poems, and in subsequent editions, the reading is

> Held high the steady scale, but sheath'd the sword.

But the sword of Justice is not sheathed. Hawkins removed the verbal difficulty, and obliterated the image.

To put it briefly, the editor of the poems has to establish his text, whereas the editor of the prose works finds it established for him—though he must always be on his guard against misprints.

Let me revert in conclusion to what Johnson says of Dryden: "The hastiness of his productions might be the effect of necessity; but his subsequent neglect could hardly have any other cause than impatience of study." When Johnson's works had been hasty, there was no subsequent neglect. His patience in revision at times rivalled Pope's; but then, unlike Pope, once he had satisfied himself he remained satisfied. He threw the work aside, and grew away from it. And of this patience in revision, in the years before he met Boswell, it would appear that Boswell was wholly ignorant.

BOSWELL'S REVISES OF THE LIFE OF JOHNSON

Reprinted from the *London Mercury*, 1927

BOSWELLS' REVISES

IN the great Johnsonian collection of Mr. R. B. Adam of Buffalo are two distinct collections of the proofs of the first edition of the *Life of Johnson*. The first of these, consisting in the main of *first* proofs, is a fragment, comprising pp. 1–56 and 81–224 of the first volume. The second, consisting in the main of *revised* proofs, is virtually complete.

Mr. Adam has produced a collotype facsimile of a part of the first collection. It may be recorded here that the pages which are *not* included in the facsimile contain no corrections of any great moment.

Of the second collection, which is of even greater interest than the first, very little has hitherto been made known. Mr. Adam has, once more, deserved the grateful thanks of Johnsonians by sending the precious volumes to this country for use in the revision, now in progress, of Birkbeck Hill's edition; and by authorizing the present publication.

Nothing will be thought unimportant that adds detail or accuracy to the *corpus* of *Johnsoniana*, or that throws light on the personality of the great biographer. No apology, therefore, is offered for the inclusion in this selection of many particulars in themselves minute. Of the corrections and variations here noticed, some add fresh morsels to the mass of ascertained fact; some clear up obscurities which have troubled editors; all help to build up the picture of Boswell, nearing the end of his task, but remitting nothing of the labour given to its perfection:

> Quo fit ut OMNIS
> Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
> VITA SENIS.

Boswell comes very well out of this unusual scrutiny. If

he betrays a fault, it is nothing less venial than over-anxiety; and if he is over-anxious, it is all in the good cause of accuracy. For the rest, his marginalia show all the virtues that a printer or publisher could wish to find in his author—legibility, promptitude, quick appreciation of the nice points of printing, imperturbable good-humour and politeness.

The selections are roughly classified under the following heads:

1. Boswell and his Printer.
2. Various Corrections.
3. Alterations of *Ipsissima Verba*.
4. The Cancel Leaves.

The book, which is bound in two volumes (the top edge slightly trimmed), seems to lack only the portrait and facsimiles, which (being printed elsewhere?) were perhaps not accessible to the person in Mr. Baldwin's printing-house who must be presumed to have acquired and preserved the sheets. I hope this was Mr. Selfe, the corrector of the press, who certainly deserved to have a copy.

It is clear enough what these sheets are. In Mr. Adam's imperfect collection of proofs, as far as the facsimiles inform us, each sheet is numbered 1 on the recto of the first leaf, and on the same page is Boswell's instruction 'Send a Revise'. (Sheets Q and S of this collection, however, are numbered 2, and Boswell writes 'Let me have another Revise'.) In the perfect collection the great majority of sheets bear the number 2, and the direction 'For Press when carefully read by Mr. Selfe and corrected', or words to the same effect. (Note that 'read by Mr. Selfe' means *verified*, not what we call *read for press*; that had already been done, and it is after settling the reader's queries that Boswell gives his *imprimatur*.) A certain number of the sheets (including S of vol. 1) are marked 3; and one is marked 4. (A few

sheets, though corrected like the rest, lack Boswell's usual instruction; possibly he was sometimes able to return two sheets at once; and one sheet—O of vol. 1—has the note 'Send a Revise'.) Again, Boswell once or twice on these sheets refers to the former proofs: 1. 266 "the proof No. 1.", 2. 529 'It is so in the Proof'.

The collection consists, therefore, of Revises or Re-revises. A few sheets, however, are doubtful. In vol. 1, E and Hhh have no number and no corrections, and the paper is much cleaner than usual. These are either duplicate proofs or revises, or, more probably, perfect copies, what a printer to-day calls "clean" sheets. In vol. 2 the last two sheets, 4 E and 4 F, have no corrections by Boswell, and are probably duplicates. (It is perhaps worth noting that E of vol. 1 in Mr. Adam's other collection—*presumably* therefore a first proof—is marked for press. Thus there may have been *no* revise of that sheet.)

The "preliminaries" call for separate description. The title-page of vol. 1 differs slightly from the final form. The *Dedication* and *Advertisement* seem to be final. The *Alphabetical Table of Contents* is composite. The first sheet, A, represents an incomplete state. It ends with the word *Monckton*. The second sheet, B, is in more or less final form. It begins with *London*, thus overlapping the first sheet, which was expanded (in a proof now lost) and so "ran over". The *Corrections and Additions* are final.

The manuscript notes on the revises are in (at least) three hands—Boswell's, the reader's, and a third, which may possibly be identified as Malone's. They are of three kinds—queries, answers to queries and other corrections, and Boswell's instructions, explanations, and other comments. A certain number of corrections and remarks, which are not in Boswell's hand, can hardly be due to the reader. We should naturally ascribe them to Malone; and that is

Mr. Adam's opinion; but other experts are not prepared to say that they are in Malone's hand.

In the selection given below, the references are to volume and page; the references added in brackets, to the volumes and pages of Birkbeck Hill. Quotations from the spoken words, or the letters, of Johnson or Boswell in the text (or the text as corrected) are indicated by *double* quotation marks; comments and instructions by Boswell (or another) in the margin are indicated by *single* quotation marks. Otherwise extracts are not always "quoted"; but ambiguity has been avoided by various devices.

1: BOSWELL AND HIS PRINTER

1. 1. 'For Press when closely looked at particularly the numbers of the pages & other such small things and corrected. How lucky is it that I have had this *Revise*. In the alteration Note p 2 *franly* instead of frankly would have looked ill. I trust we shall have a *very* correct book. Sir J. Reynolds a few minutes after the Revise came.'

We know how Boswell came to quote Sir Joshua; for on the first page of the previous proof he had written:

'Let me have another *Revise* sent to Sir Joshua Reynolds's in Liecester Square where I dine.'

In the margin Boswell has written '1750 Copies.'

1. 17. 'Pray be very careful that no letters drop out as in *meads* on this page.'

flowery meads at the end of a line had dwindled to *flowery me*.

1. 49. 'Be sure to compare Urbane etc (1. 113) both latin and english with the original.'

1. 53. (1. 109–110). The printer was troubled by the quotations from the rough draft of *Irene*. In one place he asks 'Is any word omitted?' *Boswell*: 'No. They are imperfect notes. Allright.' (*Allright*, which Boswell writes as one word, is

the modern *O.K.*) In the paragraph beginning *I shall select*, the printer wished the words *but is answered* to be in roman, as not part of the quotation; *Boswell*: 'No. I give all the parts of Johnson's M.S. in Italicks.'

1. 65. 'Pray attend very nicely as I have found strange omissions.'

'Pray attend to the *numbers* in marking the notes.'

1. 161. 'I am sorry that there must be a little over-running etc., in this sheet. But we must make as good a Book as may be.'

1. 171. (1. 312). The Romans, like others, as soon as they grew rich, grew corrupt; and in their corruption sold the lives and freedoms of themselves, and of one another. [From a review by Johnson.]

The reader queried the last words.

'I am obliged to you. It appears strange at first. But *themselves* refers to the *Nation in general* and *one another* refers to individuals.'

1. 181. (1. 330)—*The Idler*. Boswell added in Revise the words: and pollute his canvas with deformity (added by Johnson to a paper by Reynolds), and made other small corrections. Fearing these might be misunderstood he wrote the whole in full in the lower margin; and as if this were not enough, wrote in the inner margin: 'The corrected passage is fully written at the bottom.' A similar case is 1. 377, where he writes:

'To avoid a variety of separate references I have written the corrected sentence on this page fully out as above; but you will find little to alter in printing' [because the change was mainly by way of transposition].

1. 185. 'N.B. There is a strange errour in this sheet. The continuation of the note on p. 187 is printed on p. 189

instead of p. 188. Let this be rectified, and then—*For Press when carefully read by Mr. Selfe and corrected.*'

1. 193–4 (cf. 1. 353). At the end of 1760 Boswell inserted in Revise:

> Johnson who was ever awake to the calls of humanity wrote this year an Introduction* to the proceedings of the Committee for clothing the french prisoners.

(This was moved to another place, and slightly altered, in a later edition.) On the first page of the sheet he wrote:

> 'N.B. I have *catched* a small fugitive piece in 1760, which *must* be put into its place on the next page. I hope that by making less White between the poetical divisions you may get it in without changing anything more than in this first leaf.'

The printer carried out this suggestion.

Another 'catch' is reported at 1. 425–7 (2. 267):

> 'By revising this sheet again I have catched an Island which I had omitted.'

This was Inchkenneth, which he adds to the catalogue of islands visited by Johnson. At that point he becomes nervous:

> 'Pray observe that in Inchkenneth there is first an H and then a K; as these letters are apt to be mistaken in M.S. I mention this. The first syllable of this word is the same word with the measure *Inch*.'

1. 289. 'N.B. The same number of the Conversation as a separate publication with its own title-page, to be thrown off as of the Letter to Lord Chesterfield.'

This is the offprint, *A Conversation between His Most Sacred Majesty George III and Samuel Johnson, LL.D. illustrated with observations, By James Boswell, Esq.* This, like the

Letter to Chesterfield, was issued as a pamphlet at half a guinea. Both are dated 1790.

1. 393. 'I have attended to all the Qrs. I am obliged to you for the suggestions. In this page there are two good corrections.' [of *which* omitted, and of *awful* for *aweful*.]

1. 465 (2. 326)—Lord Pembroke's saying about Johnson's *bow-wow-way*. The vigilant reader asks 'Qr. before?' *Boswell*: 'No. It is in my Tour to the Hebrides.' The question of duplicates had come up earlier, 1. 394; cf. 1. 226 (2. 216 and 1. 417). On the second quotation about Dr. John Campbell's principles and practice (who took off his hat in passing a church, but never went inside), there is in the margin a note by the reader (or Malone?):

'In p. 226 this is said before.' *Boswell*: 'But in different phrase so stet.'

1. 395 (2. 217)—the passage about Johnson's attempted journal, and the "particulars of his early years". There is a marginal note, perhaps in the same hand as the last: 'This almost verbatim.' It is not quite clear what is complained of; the reference may be to 1. 365 (2. 166) about "the little circumstances of his life"; or to 1. 235 (1. 433) about keeping a journal. However that may be, Boswell did not agree—'It is much varied so stet'.

2. 5 (2. 416)—the word *spent* accidentally omitted: 'Thank you. Strange that such a word should not have been observed!'

2. 9. Johnson's age is given in the margin as 66, and queried.

'Undoubtedly 67. Pray observe that Johnson's age is just *nine* years less than the Century.'

2. 25. 'Mr. Boswell will bring more copy tomorrow 30 Septr.'

2. 63 and 93 (3. 39 and 2. 282)—*κάθαρσις τῶν παθημάτων* and Johnson's Greek 'tetrastick' on Goldsmith. The reader was unhappy about the accents:

> 'Would it not be better to omit them or make them right—If you choose to keep them in I will take Care of them.'

Boswell is for once indifferent:

> 'You may omit the accents.' 'I leave it optional to you to have accents or not. Mr. Thomas Warton used none.'

2. 137.—'Pray be very careful as there are several nice corrections.'

2. 160 (3. 178)—the number of people 'attached' to the Laird of Auchinleck; *five hundred* is corrected to *six hundred* with this justification: 'I have counted them carefully by *five* to a family.'

2. 161 and 165 (3. 186). The passage about the Duke of Devonshire originally stood thus:

> He thus characterised the old Duke of Devonshire, grandfather of the present Duke:
>
> "He was not a man of superior abilities, though Basil Kennet would persuade us he was; but"

&c. In the Revise, Basil Kennet was removed, and Boswell, with characteristic thoughtfulness, filled the gap by writing:

> grandfather of the present representative of that very respectable family.

On the first page of the sheet is this warning against premature printing off:

> 'This token for another night for Basil Kennet & whether the Old Duke was Grandfather or Great Grandfather of the present.'

This again is deleted; and 'Pray be very careful to observe the corrections' is the final injunction.

2. 186 (3. 222). The note on Mrs. Desmoulins was added, and again Boswell makes room: 'I think you may find room for the note, without over-running, by taking *shop* up into the line above'; *shop* had a line to itself, and was moved accordingly.

2. 206. 'See always if my reference to any page be exact according to the sheet *for press*.' This difficulty troubled him a good deal, as it troubles all conscientious authors who do not keep a duplicate of their corrections—and sometimes if they do. E.g.

> 2. 254. 'Saturday—I sent this morning a note that the number wanted for the note on this page is *sixty two*.'
> 2. 284. 'Look in Mr. Selfe's Revises if the page be right.'
> 2. 529 (first page of Yyy). 'The reference 1. relates to p. 293. But see if it be not on the preceding page, Sheet Xxx. It is so in the *Proof*.'
> 2. 217 (first page of Ff).—'Gg must wait a day or two. But be going on. There will be no over-running.'—'N.B. You do not put a semicolon often enough. Pray attend to this. But it is *my duty* to point. So I have no right to find fault.'

2. 223 (3. 284). The note about Mrs. Knowles and her *sutile pictures*, which Mrs. Piozzi or her printer had made *futile*, was added. Boswell must have been pleased with his triumph; but he did not forget the printer's convenience:

> 'If the *note* can be printed without deranging the press-work, well—If not, leave it out.'

2. 225. 'I expected to have seen also the Revise of Hh *at least*. I request a little more dispatch.'

This is the only sign of any approach to impatience.

2. 257. The response seems to have been prompt.

'This is very well done indeed. Pray gentlemen Compositors let me have as much as you can before Christmas.'

2. 279—a mistake rectified (1778 for 1779 as date of first publication of *The Lives of the Poets*); it disappears in the later edition. In the Revise is a foot-note:

Notwithstanding all my anxious attention to chronological order, I find that I have ascribed to this year [see page], the publication of his Prefaces to the Poets, which in fact came out early in the next year.

For the missing reference (181) Boswell notes 'Beginning of the year 1788 [meaning 1778]. Get it exact from Mr. Selfe.'

2. 280 (3. 370)—Reynolds and the Empress of Russia:

'Pray be very correct in printing the words of the Empress of *all the Russias*.'

But it is not so printed, and no actual *correction* appears in the Revise.

2. 323 (3. 436)—'How came you to omit the title of Dr. Dunbar's Book? I sent it on a slip of paper last night.'

2. 522 (4. 329)—Human life not machinery:

He agreed with me, and added, "The small-pox can less be accounted for than an execution, upon the supposition of machinery; for we are sure it comes without a fault."

This is removed and a generalization substituted:

He agreed with me now, as he always did, upon the great question, etc.

The reason is in the margin:

'I strike out this tho' in my notes, because I do not see its meaning & I may have erred.'

2. 522 (4. 329)—

the Reverend Mr. Vilette, who has been Ordinary of Newgate for no less than years.

The blank is filled by *seventeen* in the first edition, altered in a later edition to *eighteen*.

'Send my note to Mr. Villette in the morning & open the answer. Or inquire of Mr. Akerman for the number of years. Get it somehow.'

2. 537. 'Sheet Yyy is with Mr. Wilkes to look at a note. [Doubtless that on p. 533 (4. 347) about the young lady who eat three pigeons.] But there will be no such alteration as to interfere with this [i.e. sheet Zzz]. It will be observed that there is yet to come an additional train of *note* upon page 1014 [i.e. of the manuscript?]. You must contrive to manage so as that there may be at least four or five lines on each page of text. I shall contract the note as much as I can—and I hope by Monday to have *All the remaining copy in the Printing House*. 4 March 1791.'

(The first proofs if they survived might explain the instructions about the '*train* of note').

'If possible let us be *out* this month.'

'Pray let Mr. Stuart find out & inform me exactly where the engraver lives, who cut the crest for the title-page of my Tour.'

2. 329 (first page of Uu)—'The Qs &c in the [Revise *erased*] Proof of Uu shall be attended to on the Revise of next sheet.' The explanation of this is not apparent. Perhaps Boswell has made some slip.

(3. 254)—'Don't you know the *Stephani* the famous Printers!'—the name had been misprinted.

2. 345—'N.B. P 346 must not be laid on till I come and adjust the passage where Mr. Nichols is mentioned.'

This is in the first note on p. 346 (4. 36–7), which after quoting from Johnson's letters to Nichols (about the *Lives of the Poets*) concludes:

See several more in "The Gentleman's Magazine," 1785.

Then followed:

> That Mr. Nichols urged him to dispatch is evident from the following sentence in one of his Letters to Mrs. Thrale: "I have finished Prior; so a fig for Mr. Nichols."

Boswell removed this and substituted an encomium on Nichols's zeal in preserving 'every fragment of so great a man'.

2. 353 (4. 48)—'N.B. *This page* must not be laid on till I hear from Dr. Parr whether his name may be mentioned.'—'N.B. Yy is to stand for a day or perhaps *two*. 12 Janry.' This refers to the long note which is on pp. 352 and 353 (and therefore partly in Yy, partly in Zz) of the first edition (4. 47–8 in Hill). The eulogy of Johnson quoted in the note was no doubt well known to be Parr's; and when Boswell writes of 'the lustre of his reputation, honestly acquired by profound learning and vigorous eloquence', it is clear that the disguise is merely pretended. But he would have liked to give Parr's name; for he wrote to him on 10 January requesting 'to hear by return of post if I may say or guess that Dr. Parr is the editor of these tracts'. We must conclude that Parr preferred not to be named.

2. 387 (4. 97)—Mr. Thomas Holles, the strenuous Whig. The name is so spelled in the Revise.—

> 'Q if not Holl*i*s. See some magazine some years ago. I dare say it will be found in Mr. Baldwin's London Magazine. [Baldwin was Boswell's printer.] I am pretty sure it is Holl*i*s. I think Brand-Holl*i*s who took the name for an estate is fellow both of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies. So you will see in a Red Book.'

The Memoirs of Thomas Brand-Hollis, Esq., F.R.S. and S.A. (1808) show that Thomas Hollis ('republican', *D.N.B.*), who died in 1774, left his estates 'to his dear friend and fellow-

traveller Thomas Brand'. Brand soon after assumed the name of Hollis.

2. 417—the printer has an innings: 'Sir—More Copy if you please.'

2. 505 and 512 (3. 143).

> 'I could wish that the form in which p. 512 is were not thrown off, till I have an answer from Mr. Stone the gentleman mentioned in the note to tell me his Christian name, that I may call him Esq.'

The Christian name of Mr. Stone of Hackney remained unknown.

1. 474 (2. 342)—a good example of Boswell's nice sense of the fine points of printing. When Johnson said, "No; Charles the Second was not such a man as ——, (naming another King). He did not destroy his father's will", Boswell's comment is 'Make the ——— a little longer' (i.e. more suggestive of "George II").

There are many others. 2. 170, on a date, September 23, he remarks, 'The figure 3 seems larger than the figure 2.' He seems not to have realized that (in the types of that time) 3 is always a "descender".

2. 230. He attacks the question whether there should be a mark of interrogation at the end of the sentence:

> "Does not St. Paul say, 'I have fought the good fight of faith, I have finished my course; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of life'?"

So the reader wished to print.

> *Boswell*: 'I am not sure whether there should be a full stop, or point of interrogation at *life*. Do as you will. But it seems strange to me as it is a quotation *affirmative*.'

2. 354 (4. 50)—the Palace of Holy- [end of line] Rood House. *Boswell*: 'I wish Holyrood House could be in one

line. I now see how.' The *how* was by inserting *Royal* before *Palace*.

2. 356. 'Why *two* catchwords?' The catchwords are *I then*. Boswell, not knowing the printer's notion that *I* is too inconspicuous for this purpose, deleted *then*. The printer, of course, ignored the correction.

2. 477—end of 1783, followed by

> And now I am arrived at the last year of the life of SAMUEL JOHNSON.
>
> 'Make a little more White between the years.'

1. 50 (1. 113)—the title of the ode *Ad Urbanum*. *Boswell*: 'Ad Urbanum must have the asterisk* to mark it.'

> *The Reader*: 'Should not the distinguishing asterisk be *pre*fixed thus **Ad Urbanum*?' *Boswell*: 'No. I think it would appear awkward.'

(The asterisk, it will be remembered, indicates writings of which Johnson acknowledged the authorship.)

2: VARIOUS CORRECTIONS

1. 135 (1. 252)—account of *The Adventurer*:

> He now relieved the drudgery of his Dictionary, and the melancholy of his grief, by taking an active part in the composition of "The Adventurer," in which he began to write April 10, marking his essays with the signature T, by which most of his papers in that collection are distinguished: those, however, which bear that signature and also that of *Mysargyrus*, were not written by him, but, as I suppose, by Dr. Bathurst.

Boswell's account of *The Adventurer* is not very satisfactory. But the Revises show signs of attention. It has been pointed out that April 10, the date given for Johnson's active part in the paper, is inconsistent with what follows; for No. 39 on Sleep (by Johnson) was published

March 20. April 10, however, is a correction for March 3. Now the number for March 3 is 34, the first of those which are signed *T* and *Misargyrus*. Boswell, however, came to the conclusion that the *T. Misargyrus* papers were not Johnson's. He turned to his copy, accordingly, for the date of the first paper with the distinguishing mark *T*, without *Misargyrus*, and it is clear enough that he missed No. 39 and so found no *T* till he came to No. 45, which is April 10.

He also added, after *Bathurst*, the words *with some help from him*, but cancelled the addition.

He forgot to make a consequential correction just below, where he had stated that, when Johnson wrote to Warton on March 8, he had written only one number. This statement ceased to be intelligible when the date March 3 had been removed.

1. 265 (1. 485). It is interesting to find that the famous picture of Johnson's "minute singularities", as he sat talking or thinking, was built up by degrees. The words which follow *too, too, too*

> all this accompanied sometimes with a thoughtful look, but more frequently with a smile

were added on the revise. The sentences that follow, about blowing out his breath like a whale, as if he had made the arguments of his opponent fly like chaff before the wind, first appear in the third edition.

1. 272 (2. 1). I wrote to him frequently in the course of these two years, while I was upon my travels, but did not receive a single letter in return

altered to

> He did not favour me with a single letter for more than two years

This correction is perhaps in Malone's hand, and may have been made at his suggestion.

1. 285 (2. 25)

He published nothing this year in his own name; but the noble Dedication* to the King, of Gwyn's "London and Westminster Improved," was written by him.

Birkbeck Hill notes that "it is not easy to discover anything noble or felicitous in this Dedication". But the words *Gwyn's "London and Westminster Improved"* are a correction of "*Adam's Treatise on the Globes*".

The dedication to *this* book is such as Boswell would certainly consider noble ("Geography is in a peculiar manner the science of Princes"); but he may not have thought the same of the dedication to Gwynn; for in the revise the word *noble* is blotted; and though there is no marginal *dele*, Boswell may have intended deletion.

Adam reappears at the end of 1767, 1. 297 (2. 44); but Boswell seems to have fallen into confusion; for Adam's book, like Gwynn's, is dated 1766.

1. 317 (2. 85) Dryden's lines on love, which Boswell had forgotten, are represented in the Revise by the words *Gentle, temptestuous, &c.* This makes it clear that the lines were those in *Tyrannic Love*, which Johnson quoted again in the *Life of Dryden*:

> Love various minds does variously inspire;
> It stirs in gentle natures gentle fire,
> Like that of incense on the altar laid;
> But raging flames tempestuous souls invade;
> A fire which every windy passion blows,
> With pride it mounts, or with revenge it glows.

1. 454 (2. 308). The references to the *Remarks* on Johnson's *Journey*, and to Macpherson, whom Boswell believed to have written or inspired the *Remarks*, have been altered. *Malignant abuse* was originally *rancorous abuse*; and Macpherson was originally *a man better known in both countries*.

1. 458 (2. 313). *Taxation No Tyranny*:

> That this pamphlet was written at the desire of those who were then in power, I have no doubt; and, indeed, he owned to me, that it had been revised and curtailed by some of them [he supposed, in particular, Sir Grey Cooper. How humiliating to the great Johnson!]

—the words within brackets are struck out.

1. 460 (2. 316). A note is added on Dr. Joseph Towers, who appears in this place as a castigator of *Taxation No Tyranny*:

> Since my great friend's death, Dr. Towers has published "An Essay on the Life, Character, and Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson," in which (though a dissenting minister, *erased*) he has (in several passages, *erased*) given him liberal praise.

But Boswell cancelled the addition; remembering, perhaps, that he should have an opportunity of dealing with Dr. Towers when he came to the *Life of Milton*, 2. 348 (4. 40).

2. 26 (2. 446)—"The chaplain of a late Bishop, whom I was to assist in writing some memoirs of his Lordship, could tell me scarcely anything."

"Dr. Pearce, the late Bishop of Rochester," is struck out in the Revise. (See Hill, 3. 112, and Tinker, *Letters of Boswell*, p. 287.)

2. 28 (2. 451)—Boswell's witticism at Blenheim: "They have *drowned* the Epigram." He deleted the next sentence

> Johnson did not disapprove of the conceit.

2. 35 (2. 464)—the Revise has:

> Garrick sometimes used to take him off, squeezing a lemon into a punch-bowl, with uncouth gesticulations, and calling out, "Who's for *poonsh*?"

Three additions to this page are in the margin, of which the first only was retained:

(1) *after* gesticulations, *the words* looking round the company.

(2) *after* gesticulations, *the words* and hands not over clean. 'Would not this be better omitted?' is written just below; and Boswell saw that not even Garrick could make himself *look* as if his hands were dirty.

(3)—unplaced—He must have been a stout man said Garrick who would have been for it—i.e. for *poonsh*; this also is cancelled; presumably because there could be nothing to frighten the company, *except* the contact of Johnson's fingers with the lemon. Boswell realized that he had tried to put into the picture more than it could carry.

2. 181 (3. 370)—the Revise has:

> We have his own authority in the advertisement prefixed to the collection, that by his recommendation the poems of Watts, Blackmore and Yalden, were added.

Boswell corrected two mistakes here. It is not in the Advertisement, but in the *Life of Watts*, that the authority is to be found; where Johnson writes:

> The readers [of this Collection] are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden.

2. 199 (3. 245)—Hermes Harris: Boswell did not know, or pretended not to know, why Johnson called Harris (who was alive in 1791) "a bad prig"; for he added in the Revise this note:

> What my friend meant by these words concerning the amiable philosopher of Salisbury, I am at a loss to understand.

In a later edition the note was further expanded.

2. 206 (3. 256)—in going into Sir Joshua's drawing-room

(9 April 1778) the diners found 'a rich assemblage'. But Boswell has suppressed a detail. In the Revise are deleted the words: The Lustre was lighted.

2. 366 (4. 66)—Boswell protests that he will not withhold his tribute of admiration from Warren Hastings

> at a moment [January, 1791 *footnote*] when it is not possible that I should be suspected of being an interested flatterer. But how weak would be my voice after that of the millions whom he governed.

This allusion does not fit the context very well. What Boswell originally wrote was

> after that of a THURLOW

2. 372 (4. 73)—Gibbon's opposition to the view of Boswell and Reynolds that Johnson could make himself agreeable to ladies when he chose:

> Mr. Gibbon, perhaps from resentment of Johnson's having talked of his ugliness, which one would suppose he would not mind, controverted it.

In the margin is written:

> the historical writer, and to me offensive sneerer at what I hold sacred, controverted it.

But Boswell must have had another revise; for in the final print the description of Gibbon does not appear; and the rather lame 'which one would suppose he would not mind' (for why should he not?) is wittily altered to 'which we should think a *philosopher* would not mind'.

2. 405 (4. 127)—

> He told us, that he had in one day written six sheets of a translation from the French.

Hill thought this was the translation of Sarpi. Boswell seems to have been uncertain; for he originally wrote

> a translation of Crousaz on Pope

This, however, was at variance with his own conclusion

(Hill, 1. 137) that the translation of Crousaz's *Examen* had been wrongly attributed to Johnson, and was in fact Mrs. Carter's.

2. 463 (4. 235)—Miss Williams. Boswell perhaps felt that 'her temper had not been complacent' was too harsh; he softened the asperity by adding the words 'she had valuable qualities'.

2. 464 (4. 237)—In the notes supplied by 'one of his friends' —i.e. William Bowles of Heale, near Salisbury—a paragraph is deleted:

> He valued himself a good deal on being able to do everything for himself. He visited without a servant when he went to stay at the houses of his friends, and found few or no occasions to employ the servants belonging to the family. He knew how to mend his own stockings, to darn his linen, and to sew a button on his cloaths. "I am not" (he would often say) "an helpless man."

Boswell's explanation is interesting: 'I doubt this, therefore let it go out; and then you may more easily get in a note to Dr. Burney in the next page.' The next page is the first of a new sheet (Ooo) and in the Revise already has the note to Burney, p. 465 (4. 239). Boswell must therefore have added the letter on the first proof of Ooo.

Some corrections and comments, affecting minutiae of language and spelling, are not without interest:

2. 9 (2. 421)—the reader queried the words "aversion from entails" in Johnson's letter of 15 February 1776. *Boswell*: 'right as in Johnson's letter. Averse *from* is legitimate language.'

2. 58 (3. 29)—"You are right, Sir. We may be excused for not caring much about other people's children, for there are many who care very little about their own children."

The reader wished to delete the second *children*. *Boswell*: 'the *repetition* is the Johnsonian mode.'

2. 287 (3. 384)—a minute descant *altered to* a minute account.

2. 318 (3. 430)—the reader preferred *gaols* to *jails*. *Boswell*: 'Either way jails or gaols is in his Dictionary.'

2. 320 (3. 432)—'I think *Compters* is the proper spelling'—not *Counters*, for the name of the prison.

3: ALTERATION OF JOHNSON'S WORDS

The corrections of this class are unimportant; but they are worth noting, because the question how far Boswell rewrote or *Johnsonized* his rough minutes is interesting, and the evidence scanty.

1. 229 (1. 422)—Boswell's vexation because he could not give a supper party in his lodgings. "There is nothing in this mighty distress; nay we shall be better at the Mitre" *altered to* "this mighty misfortune".

1. 230 (1. 424)—"The King . . . cannot force a Judge to condemn a man wrongfully" *altered to* "unjustly".

1. 380 (2. 191)—taste in style. "Those of the two tastes whom you have mentioned don't differ as to good and bad. They both agree that Swift has a good neat style; but one loves a neat style, another loves a style of more splendour"

altered first (probably) to "Those of the two opposite tastes" and finally to "The two classes of persons".

2. 27 (2. 450)—"Burke *is* an extraordinary man. His vigour of mind is incessant" *altered to* "His stream of mind is per-

petual" (in another hand,[1] probably *not* Malone's). 'I restore, I find the exact words as to Burke.' Boswell's note is addressed to the printer. What does 'I find' mean? Had Boswell found a 'minute'? Or does he mean εὕρηκα—that he had found the *mot juste*? (Cf. the later conversation (4. 275): *Boswell*: "Mr. Burke has a constant stream of conversation." *Johnson*: "Yes, Sir," &c.).

2. 60 (3. 33)—Lyttelton's fear of Smollett. "This seems wonderful to Murphy and me, who never felt that anxiety, but sent what we wrote to the press, and let it take its chance" *altered to* "This seems strange".

2. 67 (3. 46). "The mode of government by one may be ill adapted to a small society, but not so in a great nation" *altered to* "but is best for a great nation".

2. 143 (3. 152)—the valetudinarian

> "thinks he may do anything that is for his ease, and indulges himself in every way. Sir, he brings himself to the state of a hog in a stye"

altered to "indulges himself in the grossest freedoms", &c.

2. 200 (3. 246)—

> "An eminent friend of ours is not so agreeable as the variety of his ideas would otherwise make him, because he talks partly from ostentation."

ideas was altered first to *talents* and then to *knowledge*—doubtless because of Johnson's known opinion about the proper sense of *idea*.

2. 265 (3. 351)—Chesterfield's speeches. "Here now are two speeches, one and the other both of which were written by me"—with two blank half-lines. Boswell failed

[1] I am probably wrong here; Mr. Adam is confident that the hand is Boswell's. See Tinker, *Young Boswell*, p. 205.

to fill the blanks, and simply substituted "ascribed to him".

2. 522 (4. 329)—religious discipline proper for convicts.

> "Sir, an ordinary clergyman will probably not impress their minds sufficiently: they should be attended by a Methodist preacher, or a Popish priest"

altered to "one of our regular clergy".

There is no sign of any tampering with Johnson's letters. There are occasional corrections, but these are doubtless corrections of the printer's misreading of Johnson's deceptive hand. There is evidence that Boswell sent the originals (when he could get them) to the printer. For at 1. 272 (1. 500), a sentence in a letter to Burney was printed thus:

> "He that claims, either in himself or for another, the honours of perfection, will surely injure the reputation which he designs to exist."

The reader writes in the margin: 'q. exist'. Boswell corrects to *assist*, and adds:

> 'I am much obliged to you for your attention. There is no wonder that a word in Dr. Johnson's hand-writing should be mistaken. But I wonder that I did not perceive the mistake from the sense. The word, I find, is *assist*.'

The error might, of course, be a copyist's; but Boswell's language seems to suggest the other explanation.

The same thing may account for an odd exchange in another place, 2. 313 (3. 421). This concerns the letter from Mrs. Thrale to Johnson, which Boswell printed, with pardonable malice, as likely to amuse his readers 'more than those well-written but studied epistles which she has inserted in her collection'. The marginal notes are as follows:

> *B.* 'Pray compare Mrs. Thrale's letter very carefully.'
> *Printer.* 'We have no Copy to compare it by.'

B. 'I have now compared it & have made it exact—*wench* not *girl* and an addition before the x x x x .'

Boswell cannot have meant the printer to look at Mrs. Piozzi's book for verification—the whole point being that she had not printed the letter. Boswell must have had the original, and have sent it to the printer. But he may have forgotten in reading the Revise that the letter had been returned to him with the first proof.

Immediately below, 2. 315 (3. 423), Boswell is sadly perplexed about Johnson's letter to Mrs. Thrale which begins: "Mr. Thrale will never live abstinently, till he can persuade himself to live by rule." Then follows a sentence which Mrs. Piozzi prints and Boswell omits. It is, as Hill notes, about diet and physic. Boswell's foot-note was originally thus:

> I leave out a few lines, the contents of which are partly too insignificant, and partly too indelicate for the publick eye.

A note, which may be Malone's, points out that this will not do; for 'it should not be supposed Dr. Johnson wrote anything indelicate to a Lady'. Boswell made several shots, e.g.:

> I have taken the liberty to leave out a few lines which Mrs. Thrale has not concealed.

Finally he recorded the liberty and said nothing of the motive.

Boswell's own letters are improved in a number of places. 1. 447 (2. 295) the ambiguous "I can only deny what is said, because your character refutes it" is altered to "on the ground that your character refutes it". 2. 118 (3. 119—the passage about Hume and Adam Smith) "Is not this an age of daring indecency?" *altered to* "effrontery"; and "impudent infidelity" *altered* (by Malone?) *to* "ostentatious infidelity". 2. 307 (3. 413) he alters the subscription from

"Most affectionately yours" (repented of as over familiar?) to "Most sincerely yours". 2. 325 (3. 438) he had a rare fit of discretion and erased the words in brackets (apparently at the reader's suggestion): "you will recollect, that when I confessed to you, that I had once [in a fiery fit] been intentionally silent to try your regard, I gave you my word and honour that I should not do so again." (*fiery* is heavily erased, but a professional who has examined the original assures me that there is no doubt of the word.)

4: CANCEL LEAVES

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the Revises is that they give us, for the first time, certain passages or names which Boswell suppressed by means of cancel leaves. The existence of cancels in the *Life* has long been known from Boswell's letters to Malone; and it is perfectly easy to discover, from any copy of the first edition, which leaves were cancelled. The cancels are indicated in what seems to be an uncommon way: by a signature within brackets. Thus if B 2 were cancelled, the cancel leaf would be signed [B 2]; if B 4 (which would normally be unsigned) were cancelled, the cancel leaf would be signed [B]. It is possible that none of the original leaves survives in any copy of the *Life* as issued to the public; but no one seems to have looked (though the booksellers do their best to make a "point" of the page which contains the wholly uninteresting misprint *gve* for *give*). The Revises, however, tell us all we want to know.

1. 272–3 (2. 1). The paragraph about Johnson's dedications, which as it stands has no special application to the year 1765 (Croker thought it "accidentally misplaced") was originally introduced there for a good reason. It ran thus:

He furnished his friend Dr. Percy, now Bishop of Dro-

more, with a Dedication* to the Countess of Northumberland, which was prefixed to his collection of "Reliques of ancient English Poetry," in which he pays compliments to (*corrected to* compliments *i.e. the verb*) that illustrious family, in the most courtly style. It should not be wondered at that one who can himself write so well as Dr. Percy, should accept of a Dedication from Johnson's pen; for as Sir Joshua Reynolds, who we shall afterwards see accepted of the same kind of assistance, well observed to me, "Writing a dedication is a knack. It is like writing an advertisement." [1] In this art no man excelled Dr. Johnson. Though the loftiness of his mind prevented him from ever dedicating in his own person, he wrote a (very *added*) great number of Dedications for others. After all the diligence I have bestowed, some of them have escaped my inquiries.

The dedications referred to are those in the first edition of Percy's *Reliques*, published in 1765, and the collected edition of Reynolds's first seven *Discourses*, published in 1778. In the passage substituted, the names of Percy and Reynolds disappear. Boswell contented himself with the statement that

> Some of these [Johnson's dedications], the persons who were favoured with them are unwilling should be mentioned, from a too anxious apprehension, as I think, that they might be suspected of having received larger assistance.

Whatever may have been his attitude at the time, Percy afterwards fully admitted his debt. See Anderson's *Life of Johnson*, third edition (1815), p. 309, where he is quoted as writing

> 'I must ingenuously confess, that the former Dedication [i.e. that of 1765], though not wholly written by him,

[1] i.e. what is now called a *preface*.

owed its finest strokes to the superior pen of Dr. Johnson; and I could not any longer allow myself to strut in borrowed feathers.'

The reason of the cancel, as stated by Boswell in a letter to Malone of 29 January 1791 (*Letters*, ed. Tinker, p. 417), was that

'though Sir Joshua certainly assured me he had no objection to my mentioning that Johnson wrote a dedication for him, he now thinks otherwise.'

Nothing is said here about Percy. (Reynolds's objection was no doubt made in time to prevent Boswell from the further disclosure he had contemplated. No mention is made, *sub anno* 1778, or in the list of Johnson's writings, of the dedication to the *Discourses*.) But Boswell was guilty of an oversight. In the index the tell-tale entry:

Percy, Dr., his 'Reliques of Ancient Poetry,' 1. 272

remained unaltered. Percy, who was easily offended, suspected that this was deliberate—that Boswell had professed to cover it up, but had intentionally left a clue. Malone hastened to reassure him, in a letter now among the Malone MSS. in the Bodleian. The date is 5 June 1792. 'Mr. B. had not been guilty of the artifice which at first sight seemed not to admit of any kind of explanation or excuse.' The indexer, Mr. Tomlins, had made the entry; and when the text was altered 'The Index was unluckily forgot to be changed'. Boswell had further assured Malone that there was no change in his new edition, except one sentence about Granger's Poems. In proof of good faith Malone sent with the letter copies of the cancel, which he asked Percy to return to him, or to Boswell if they should meet at the Club.

Though p. 271 bears the signature [Mm] indicative of a cancel, p. 273 bears the ordinary signature Nn. The two leaves were no doubt printed together. On each of the four pages 271–4, in the Revises, is written "To Set". This

means that the type had been distributed and the pages had to be reset before the two cancel leaves could be printed.

2. 29–30 (2. 453).

The passage about Granger (or Grainger) originally read thus:

> He also spoke slightingly about Granger's "Sugar-Cane": "Granger did not consider how few could be interested by that subject." I mentioned to him Mr. Langton's having told me, that this poem, when read in manuscript at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, had made all the assembled wits burst into a laugh, when, after much blank-verse pomp, the poet began a new paragraph thus:
>
> "Now, Muse, let's sing of *rats*."
>
> And what increased the ridicule was, that one of the company, who slily overlooked the reader, perceived that the word had been originally *mice*, and had been altered to *rats*, as more dignified. JOHNSON. "Percy was angry with me for laughing at 'The Sugar-cane'; for he had a mind to make a great thing of Granger's rats. There was a review of it in 'The London Chronicle,' said to be written by me; but I only helped Percy with it, and was in jest. Granger, however, might have been made a very good poet. He was an agreeable man, and would have done one any service in his power; but was, I think, quite destitute of principle—I mean quite without any notion of obligation to rectitude—any principle of duty. He was a very unlucky man. He was for some years surgeon to a regiment; he then got a Scotch degree as physician, and set up in London. Not succeeding well there, and an offer being made to him by a rich West-Indian, to go and live with him as his companion for a few years, for which he was to receive an annuity of two hundred pounds

during his life, Granger accepted it: but in the passage he fell in love with a young woman, who was a passenger in the ship; and, perhaps, grew tired of the gentleman, gave up his agreement, married the young woman, and went to St. Christopher's and set up as a physician there. He wrote to Johnston, an apothecary in London, to send him out a man to compound his medicines. Johnston sent him one, such as he could find, with an apology for his dullness. This fellow set up as a rival to Granger in his practice of physick, and got so much the better of him in the opinion of the people of St. Christopher's, that he carried away all the business; upon which Granger returned to England, and soon after died."

What follows is substantially the same as in the corrected version. But the sentence,

Thus could he indulge a luxuriant sportive imagination, when talking of a friend whom he loved and esteemed.

was added in the corrected version, after the anecdote of Percy and the *Hanover rat*; doubtless out of regard for Percy's susceptibility. The story of Granger and his successful rival is reinstated, but in a different place, and as 'the singular history of an ingenious acquaintance'. Finally, the note communicated by Percy, explaining Granger's rats and extolling his virtues, was introduced to fill the blank left by the suppression of the rich West Indian and *his* successful rival, the young passenger.

2. 288 (3. 384).

Here Boswell cancelled a leaf to suppress three names. The Revises inform us that it was Lord Charles Spencer whose cook shot himself with one pistol, and lived ten days in great agony; that the gentleman

who loved buttered muffins, but durst not eat them because they disagreed with his stomach,

and who

> resolved to shoot himself, and then he eat three buttered muffins for breakfast, before shooting himself, knowing that he should not be troubled with indigestion,

was Mr. Delmis; and that it was Steevens who, when the quarrel between Johnson and Beauclerk had been composed, sat with them after the rest of the company were gone.

2. 302 (3. 406).
Here the Revise confirms Boswell's account of this matter in his letter to Malone of 10 February 1791 (Tinker, p. 422), but adds little to it.

2. 353 (4. 48).
Here again a name was to be suppressed. Boswell's authority for Warburton's saying of Johnson, "I admire him, but I cannot bear his style", and of Johnson's answer, "That is exactly my case as to him", was William Gerard Hamilton. (Johnson's further remark in praise of Warburton, made to George Strahan, first appears in the cancel.)

2. 396 (4. 111).
The Revise shows that the "eminent friend" who distinguished between Johnson "talking for victory" and Johnson delivering his real opinion was (as Malone knew) Hamilton; and that it was Hamilton to whom Johnson said "We now have been several hours together; and you have said but one thing for which I envied you".

Boswell referred to these pages when he wrote to Malone (25 February 1791; Tinker, p. 424):

> 'I shall have more cancels. That *nervous* mortal W.G.H. is not satisfied with my report of some particulars, *which I wrote down from his own mouth*, and is so much agitated, that Courtenay has persuaded me to allow a *new edition* of them by H. himself to be made at H's expense.'

THE REVISION OF DR. BIRKBECK HILL'S *BOSWELL*

A Paper read before the Johnson Club,
Wednesday, 14 March 1928, by L. F. Powell

THE REVISION OF DR. BIRKBECK HILL'S BOSWELL

DR. BIRKBECK HILL'S edition of *Boswell's Life of Johnson* was published over forty years ago, and although the period intervening between then and now has been marked by an unparalleled activity in Johnsonian studies and many good editions have been issued, it stands out pre-eminent as the greatest edition so far produced. It is of course no ordinary edition of Boswell, any more than Boswell's book is a biography of common mould: it is a book of reference indispensable to all students of and writers on the eighteenth century. This edition has met with the approbation of the public and has been out of print for some years. The publishers, endorsing the opinion that 'when the public thinks long on any subject it commonly attains to think right', have decided that it would be better to have Dr. Hill whole than a part of him; in brief, they have recognized that Dr. Hill, like the Duke of Northumberland, is fit only to be succeeded by himself. The purpose of the present paper is to show how this will, it is confidently hoped, be accomplished: to explain the methods adopted in the preparation of an edition, which, while remaining substantially the work of Dr. Hill, will yet contain new material and present new features.

At the outset three principles were laid down for the guidance of the reviser: first, that the pagination of the new edition should correspond with that of the old; second, that the text should be revised; third, that Dr. Hill's commentary should be retained and, if necessary, amended and supplemented. I will take each point separately.

The first point, important as it is, need not detain us long. Suffice it to say that Dr. Hill's edition has long been accepted

as standard and that accordingly it is generally referred to by volume and page, and even by note, in most of the Johnsonian literature published during the last generation. As Mr. Chapman stated in 1923, 'no improvements which the publishers were likely to be able to introduce could compensate for the confusion and inconvenience which would arise if the standard method of reference were upset'.

The next point demands greater fullness, as an editor's first consideration is, or should be, devoted to his text. Dr. Hill rightly rejected Boswell's second edition, the last actually seen through the press by him, and adopted the third as the basis of his edition, because, as he argued, it represents 'the work in the condition in which it would have most approved itself to Boswell's own judgment'. This is true as regards the *content* of the edition, but, as Dr. Hill soon discovered, the *text* is not sound. Boswell never saw it, and Malone definitely disclaims all responsibility for its accuracy: he writes 'the proof-sheets of the present edition not having passed through my hands, I am not answerable for any typographical errours that may be found in it'. He continues: 'Having, however, been printed at the very accurate press of Mr. Baldwin, I make no doubt it will be found not less perfect than the former edition.' The fact is, however, that both the second and third editions are corrupt. Boswell took very great care with the first edition, as Mr. Chapman has shown in his articles on Boswell's proof-sheets. He had not only proofs and revises, but sometimes demanded second revises. He endeavoured, as he himself tell us, to make his book more perfect in the second edition, and besides introducing much new matter and correcting errors of fact, he polished his diction. He did not, however, read the proofs with the same attention that he gave to those of the first edition. An examination of the variants shows that for every correction he made, the printer made a blunder.

I have counted over two hundred, excluding errors of spelling and punctuation. It ought to be mentioned that the first and second volumes of this edition were passed through the press at the same time 'in order to supply the publick demand speedily'. The third edition reproduces these errors and perpetrates new ones: it corrects the second edition in about thirty places (some of the corrections are, I think, due to Malone). It is significant that the third edition does not make all the corrections which Boswell himself pointed out in his *Corrections and Additions* (1793). While then the third edition must perforce be accepted as the basis of the text, the readings of the other two, especially the first, must be carefully considered.

The errors are numerous and sometimes grave, but not, generally speaking, gross. Those which follow are representative of the various types.

The terms of subscription to the abortive translation of Father Paul, in two volumes quarto, were, according to the second edition, and indeed of all subsequent editions, unusual.

> 'The price will be 18*s*. each volume, to be paid, half a guinea at the delivery of the first volume, and the rest at the delivery of the second volume in sheets' (i. 135).

We know that these are impossible terms and that 'half a guinea at the time of subscribing' has been omitted by haplography.

When somebody found fault with the ancient universities for encouraging their members to write verses in unknown tongues, Johnson retorted:

> 'I would have as many of these as possible; I would have verses in every language that there are the means of acquiring. . . . And I would have at every coronation . . . University-verses, in as many languages as can be acquired' (ii. 371).

The second edition is clearly wrong in reporting Johnson as saying, ungrammatically, in the last clause: 'I would have *had* at every coronation . . . University-verses, in as many languages as *can* be acquired.' (The italics are mine.)

According to the second edition, Johnson is reported as saying:

> 'In blank-verse the language suffered more distortion, to keep it out of prose, than any inconvenience or limitation to be apprehended from the shackles and circumspection of rhyme' (ii. 124).

The first edition reads 'circumscription'. Johnson was obviously thinking of the limits imposed by rhyme, rather than the caution required in its composition.

A nice correction which almost escaped me is the following. Johnson notes in his French Diary:

> 'Much disturbed; hope no ill will be.'

Boswell's comment is:

> 'This passage, which some may think superstitious, reminds me of Archbishop Laud's Diary ' (ii. 392).

The second edition reads 'so many think', which must be wrong, because Boswell was the first to print the Diary and not many readers could have seen the passage.

A good example of parablepsy is provided by the second edition (ii. 370), where Johnson lays it down that:

> 'Absolute princes seldom do any harm. But they who are governed by them are governed by chance. There is no security for good government'

To which Richard Owen Cambridge mildly rejoins:

> 'There have been many sad victims to absolute government.'

No doubt, but what he really said was 'absolute power'. In the first edition 'power' occurs immediately below 'government' and the printer's eye got out of control.

The printer is always liable to these lapses. Here is

another showing the influence exercised by a previous word. Johnson describing Charles Congreve says (ii. 460):

> 'He is quite unsocial; his conversation is quite monosyllabical.'

The redundant 'quite' was not in the first edition.

On p. 58 of vol. iii we read:

> 'One may drink wine, and be nothing the worse for it; on another, wine may have effects so inflammatory as to injure him both in mind and body.'

There is obviously something wrong here. The first edition correctly reads 'One man may drink wine'.

Boswell, in an interesting note (iii. 86, n. 2) explaining Johnson's method of paying his debts, says:

> 'Upon a settlement of our account of expences on our Tour to the Hebrides, there was a balance due to me.'

The second edition reads 'on a Tour', as if it were 'any old' tour, and not the great adventure in the successful achievement of which Boswell exulted.

Johnson's letters are not always accurately printed by Boswell, but he was not responsible for the following palpable error which occurs first in the second edition.

> 'I hope soon to send you a few lines to read' (iii. 369: Johnson's letter to Boswell, 21 November 1778).

It was the lives of the English Poets that Johnson hoped to send, and the first edition reads 'lives' accordingly.

Or this:

> 'Mr. Dilly, who buys the book for fifteen shillings . . . will send it to his country customer at sixteen and six' (ii. 426).

No doubt Mr. Dilly was prepared to send his books to his country customers, but his chief purpose was to sell them; 'sell' has the authority of the first edition.

Similarly Boswell not infrequently lapsed into misquotation, but the printer of the second edition is responsible for

such common blunders as the following from *Hamlet* and *Cato*:

> 'In my heart of hearts' (ii. 384).
> 'If . . . he [the Numidian] chance to find
> A new repast, or an untasted spring,
> Blesses his stars, and thinks its luxury' (iii. 282).

The first edition is correct in both cases with 'heart of heart' and 'thinks it luxury'.

The second edition is sometimes erroneous in respect of dates. The letter from Boswell to Johnson dated 'July 9, 1777' (iii. 116) is an instance. The first edition gives the right date 'June 9, 1777'. Dr. Hill suggested the latter date, but failed to notice that Boswell first gave it in the first edition.

As an example of that very common source of error, homoeoteleuton, I cite the following from the second edition:

> 'Pay my sincere respects to dear Miss Langton in Lincolnshire' (iv. 267).

Johnson wrote:

> 'Pay my sincere respects to the two principal ladies in your house; and when you write to dear Miss Langton in Lincolnshire, let her know that' (Johnson's letter to Bennet Langton, 27 March 1784, as printed in the first edition).

There are of course examples which admit of doubt, such as the following. Boswell, referring to Johnson's return to wine-drinking, says in the first edition:

> The first evening that I was with him at Thrale's, I observed he poured a quantity of it into a large glass, and swallowed it greedily' (iv. 72).

The second edition makes the quantity large. It is a nice point, but we are safer with the first edition on the ground

that a deliberate alteration was improbable, the quantity of wine being determined by the size of the glass.

One of the gravest errors in the book occurs at the end, in the long note containing Johnson's will. The second edition reads:

> 'His express declaration with his dying breath as a Christian, as it had been often practised in such solemn writings, was of real consequence from this great man' (iv. 404 n.).

His express declaration of what? 'Of his faith as a Christian.' As Mr. Chapman remarks: 'It is incredible that Boswell deleted these words to the detriment of sense and grammar. They must be right.' The true reading of the first edition has never, I believe, been restored.

The fresh errors introduced by the third edition are not so numerous. I cite the following:

> 'One week and one year are very like one another' (i. 361).

The sentence is from Johnson's letter to Baretti (10 June 1761). The *European Magazine*, Boswell's source, supports the reading of the first two editions, if support is needed. It is

> 'One week and one year are very like another'.

It misquotes Johnson's Dedication of Hoole's *Tasso* to the Queen by converting the 'Princes of Ferrara' into one 'Princess' (i. 383). And Waller's *Epistles*,

> 'Sacharissa's beauty's wine,
> Which to madness does decline' (ii. 360).

Dr. Hill restored the true reading 'incline'.

The worst feature of the third edition, however, is its faulty punctuation, of which I will give one example out of very many.

> 'To please others by drinking wine, is something only, if there be nothing against it' (iii. 328).

The comma should come before 'only', not after it.

The second edition is not free from this troublesome defect, which I have striven to rectify.

> 'The Psalmist's period of sound human life in later ages, may have a failure' (iii. 191).

The first edition reads correctly:

> 'The Psalmist's period of sound human life, in later ages may have a failure.'

The Oxford printers, I regret to say, added to the imperfection of the text. Most of their errors are due to their inability to project themselves into the eighteenth century: they accordingly often joined together what Mr. Baldwin's printers set apart (*every body*, *every thing*, *any body*, *any thing*); sometimes modernized such forms as *croud*, *groupe*, *heighth*, *wave* (waive), words ending in *-our*, proper names, and, *horresco referens*, lopped from many words the 'Saxon k' to which Boswell was so passionately attached. Added to this, they made a number of literals, printed the singular for the plural, and the plural for the singular; more serious were 'manner of animosity' for 'matter of animosity', 'the faults of a Scotchman' (iii. 347) for 'the faults of Scotchmen', the substitution of the doubtful dagger for the certain asterisk (i. 150), and the omission of the latter entirely (ii. 204). Their errors will be amended by their successors—silently.

Having thus shown that the text as we have it to-day needs careful revision, I turn to Boswell's sources. Whenever Boswell gives a letter or a document an effort has been made to find, not only his immediate source, but the original source. An examination of those documents which could be found has shown that Boswell's own errors are more numerous than is generally realized. A few examples will suffice. Boswell quotes Warburton as saying:

> 'I shall endeavour to give you what satisfaction I can in any thing you want to be satisfied in any subject of Milton' (i. 29).

The original letter now in the British Museum tells us that he wrote 'on y^e^ subject of Milton'.

In an undated letter to Cave, Johnson is made roundly to condemn an 'Italian' contribution to the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

'I have read the Italian—nothing in it is well' (i. 156). Mr. Adam, who owns the letter, tells me that it is certainly 'Latin'.

Boswell's copies of Johnson's letters to Tom Warton are full of inaccuracies. Mr. Chapman, to whom I am indebted for a collation of these and many other letters, thinks that Warton caused an undergraduate to make copies for Boswell's use. Whoever copied them surpassed himself when he made Johnson write:

'Whether I shall find upon the coast a Calypso that will court, or a Polypheme that will resist' (i. 278).

Johnson wrote 'or a Polypheme that will eat me'. Curiously enough, Johnson endows the one-eyed giant with a plurality of eyes:

'But if Polypheme comes, have at his eyes.'

Boswell had great difficulty in deciphering the manuscript of Johnson's French Diary, which was seen by Croker, but not by Dr. Hill. He blundered badly. Influenced perhaps by a knowledge of Johnson's boundless curiosity, he made him write 'Queries on the *Sellette*' (ii. 392). Johnson perhaps knew all about the *Sellette*, for he merely recorded that 'Queeney' Thrale sat on it.

Others besides Boswell have been beaten by Johnson's difficult hand. The Welsh Diary was edited from the manuscript (which was inaccessible to Boswell and to Dr. Hill) by Duppa, who made sad work of it. Here is an example of his lack of skill. On 19 September 1774 Johnson records (according to Duppa):

'We came to Birmingham, and I sent for Wheeler, whom I found well.'

On the next day:

> 'We breakfasted with Wheeler. . . . Wheeler gave me a tea-board.'

And finally on the 21st:

> 'Wheeler came to us again' (v. 458).

Duppa identified him as Dr. Wheeler, Regius Professor of Divinity, and Canon of Christ Church. These are unusual attentions from so great a dignitary, and Dr. Hill, knowing that Johnson would no more have 'sent for' a Canon of Christ Church than for a bishop, made diligent search through the Birmingham directories. His labour was vain. The man for whom Johnson sent was his old schoolfellow, Hector.

The text of Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* has been established by Mr. Chapman, and it will not be necessary to recollate the first editions.

Johnson's Welsh journal offers some difficulty. I have given you one example of its editor's skill, or lack of it. Here is another. Duppa makes the party set out from Streatham at 11 a.m. on Tuesday 5 July and arrive at Barnet at 1.40 p.m. on the next day, the 6th. It wasn't so bad as that even in the eighteenth century. As a matter of fact they reached Dunstable at night and got safely to the Swan at Lichfield on the 6th.

Moreover, Mrs. Thrale also wrote a diary, which it would be foolish to ignore as it illustrates Johnson's. For instance, she tells us that on this occasion they were late in starting because Johnson didn't get up till 10 o'clock; he was, however, in good spirits and 'often said how much pleasanter it was travelling by night than by day'.

Duppa's text is worthless and it will be necessary to re-edit it entirely. An effort will be made to retain Dr. Hill's pagination.

I will now summarize the method adopted in the treatment of the text:

(1) To establish the text by restoring or retaining the best readings, whether they occur in the first, second, or third edition.

(2) Whenever the reading printed in the text differs from the third edition, to give the variants in a critical note.

(3) To print in vol. vi a list of all the important variants, including additions and omissions.

(4) To correct Boswell's textual errors by critical notes. (His readings must of course be religiously preserved.)

(5) To correct any textual error made subsequent to the third edition silently.

The effect of this method will be to turn what is almost, but not entirely, a diplomatic edition, into a critical one. The critical notes, i.e. those which establish the text, will be printed between it and the commentary. Remembering that 'conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses', I have indulged in it very rarely. I believe I have induced Mr. Chapman to agree that the Reverend Mr. Neal McLeod, instead of being the 'cleanest-headed' man that Johnson had met with in the Western Islands, was the 'clearest-headed' (v. 338). The same misprint of Boswell's *r* as an *n* is made in vol. i, p. 475, where 'Vranyken' is printed for 'Vranyker'. Such frolicks will be relegated to a critical note.

We now come to the commentary; that noble edifice which Dr. Hill built up with loving care, great knowledge, and penetrative insight. It was not Boswell's business to write Johnson's panegyric, but his life; it is not mine, indeed it would be impertinent, to praise Dr. Hill's work, but to revise it. I must say, however, that the more I study it, the more I admire its excellence. Johnson reminds us that 'Every man's performances, to be rightly estimated, must be compared with the state of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities'. I would remind

you that Dr. Hill's work was compiled without the aid of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the *Oxford Dictionary*, the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, the *Bibliography* of Courtney and Nichol Smith, and many other works of reference accessible to the modern scholar. Dr. Hill's foundations are secure and will not be disturbed: all that is needed is to restore and to add to, here and there, the superstructure.

Dr. Hill himself continued his labours with the *Miscellanies*, the *Letters*, and finally the *Lives of the Poets*; a remarkable series, the value of which is not always fully appreciated: he also left many notes and some corrections in his own copy of the *Life*, now in his old college. His editions, especially his edition of the *Life*, gave an impetus to Johnsonian studies in two continents. Mr. Reade started to glean in 1906 and has never ceased, except for a period when he was otherwise engaged 'somewhere in Flanders'. The catastrophe which temporarily held up Mr. Reade induced another Johnsonian scholar, like him 'neither panting for laurels nor delighting in blood', to edit in Macedonia the two Hebridean journals. He also has not ceased and shows no sign of ceasing. Mr. R. B. Adam published his *Catalogue* in 1921 and Professor Tinker his edition of Boswell's *Letters* three years later. Manuscripts, diaries, and other original documents, unknown to Dr. Hill, have been discovered in the national archives or elsewhere; new letters by the score have been found and old ones re-collated; additions to Johnson's already numerous writings have been, and are being, made; editions and translations of his works untraced by his bibliographers have been found; copies of Boswell's *Life* and Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes* annotated by contemporaries have been brought to our knowledge; finally English literature has become a subject of study and research in the ancient universities, bibliography

has been elevated to a science, textual criticism has been applied to the English classical authors, and critical editions of their works produced.

An effort has been made to incorporate into the new edition as much of this new material as is relevant and to apply to it modern methods of treatment. The procedure adopted is as follows:

(1) Every quotation in Dr. Hill's spacious commentary has been verified and scrutinized, and when taken from an edition that has no authority or is inaccessible, found in a standard edition or the best available. The numerous quotations from Johnson's letters are referred to by Dr. Hill's number (Mr. Chapman proposes to adopt Dr. Hill's numbering in the edition he is preparing, and to indicate the new letters by a second series of numbers, e.g. 23·1, 23·2, 23·3; accordingly letters not printed by Dr. Hill in his edition will be referred to in the same way). In the quotations from Johnson's works the title of the particular piece has been added, whenever necessary. The references to Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* and to Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes* have been adjusted to Dr. Hill's editions. This has been done because Dr. Hill in these works frequently adds to his commentary on the *Life*: his edition of Gibbon's *Memoirs* has been used for the same reason. Sometimes, especially as regards Mrs. Piozzi, two references have been given: one to the original edition, the other to the *Miscellanies*. The cross-references in the *Life* itself will be to volume and page.

(2) All matter added to the commentary, whether added to an existing note or forming a new note, will be enclosed in italic crotchets. When there is not room on the page for the new matter, it will be printed in appendixes at the end of each volume.

(3) The list of authorities cited and editions used will be considerably enlarged and Dr. Hill's ample Index will be

still further amplified by the insertion of the references to the new matter and by the addition of dates.

(4) A new feature is the introduction of a head-line giving the date, Boswell's date, of the underlying narrative; this includes, when it is known, the month and the day of the week.

An adequate account of the changes in and additions to the commentary, which recent research has made possible, would require another paper. Boswell's book lends itself to annotation; it is full of passages which simply invite comment; but restraint has been exercised and notes have only been made where the text needs illustration, explanation, or correction.

As 'the compleat explanation of an authour is not to be expected from any single scholiast', so the worthy presentation of this great edition is hardly possible from a single reviser. This reviser, although well aware of the merit attaching to self-confidence, has been content on many occasions to defer to the maturer knowledge and greater experience of those who have generously assisted him: Professor E. Bensly, Mr. R. W. Chapman, Sir Frank MacKinnon, Mr. Frank Miller, Mr. Nichol Smith, Mr. Aleyn Lyell Reade, and Mr. Leonard Whibley, all of whom have read his proofs with diligent care; to these names should be added that of Mr. Frederick Page, whose services have been constant and whose patience inexhaustible. These and many others have contributed to the production of a work which will, it is confidently believed, prove worthy of its subject, its author, and its editor, Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, and Birkbeck Hill.

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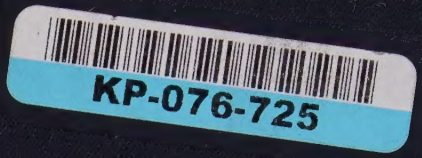
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